

## CLAIMS:

1. A coupling module (1) for a network (30) interlinking electronic appliances, characterized in that it comprises at least two inputs/outputs for connecting different transmitter and receiver modules (20 – 27), wherein these transmitter and receiver modules can communicate with the electronic appliances of the network, and wherein the coupling module (1) can transmit data between the transmitter and receiver modules (20 – 27).

2. A coupling module as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that it is set up in such a way that it can convert between different transmission protocols of the connected transmitter and receiver modules (20 – 27).

3. A coupling module as claimed in claim 2, characterized in that it is set up to determine the transmission protocol used by an electronic appliance of the network (30), and to use this protocol and the appropriate transmitter and receiver module (20 – 27) for communication with this appliance.

4. A coupling module as claimed in at least one of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that it is set up to determine from the incoming data the electronic appliance addressed by this data, and then to pass the data on to the addressed appliance, via the appropriate transmitter and receiver module (20 – 27), in the associated transmission protocol.

5. A coupling module as claimed in at least one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that it is formed by a programmable data-processing unit with a data/program memory connected to it.

6. A coupling module as claimed in at least one of claims 1 to 5, characterized in that it is set up to undertake the function of a firewall (11) in the transmission path between different transmitter and receiver modules (20 – 27).

7. A coupling module as claimed in at least one of claims 1 to 6, characterized in that it is set up to undertake the function of a proxy server (11) in the transmission path between different transmitter and receiver modules (20 – 27).

5 8. A coupling module as claimed in at least one of claims 1 to 7, characterized in that the transmitter and receiver modules (20 – 27) enable communication in accordance with, for example, the standards Docsis, Eurodocsis, CableTV, GSM, UMTS, GPRS, ISDN, xDSL, Power Line Communications (PLC), IEEE 802.11, ETSI Bran, Hiperlan 1/2, DECT, HomeRF, Bluetooth, USB, IEEE 1394, IrDa, and/or Ethernet.

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9. A coupling module as claimed in at least one of claims 1 to 8, characterized in that it is set up to pass incoming data on after signal amplification in the same transmission protocol.

15 10. A coupling module as claimed in at least one of claims 1 to 9, characterized in that it is set up to take on standby functions of connected electronic appliances.